Nejimaki no Niwa

by Kayase Shiki

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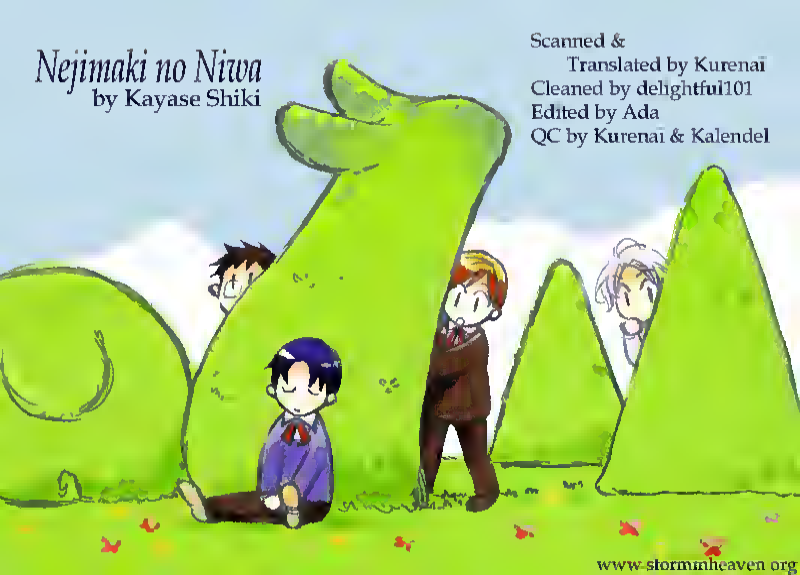

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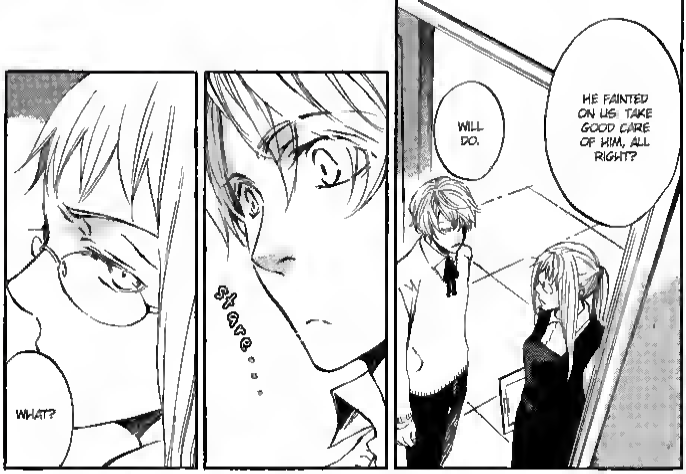
Chapter 2

DOES HE USUALLY COLLAPSE WITHOUT WARNING?
ACTUALLY... THIS IS A FIRST FOR ME
I HEARD RALIM PASSED OUT?
KARBI
NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT COMPANY IT SHOULD BE OK FOR ME TO LEAVE
I'M GOING TO SUBMIT THE FORM FOR USING THE NURSE'S OFFICE
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT CLEANING UP THE ART ROOM WE'RE IN NO HURRY

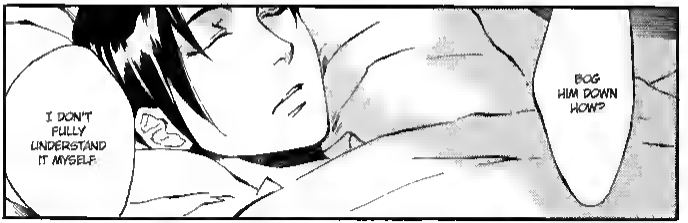

HE FAINTED ON US. TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM, ALL RIGHT?
WILL DO.
Sigh...
WHAT?

OH!
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO STARE—
OOF!
SMACK

SAVE IT. I DON'T NEED YOU TO TREAT ME LIKE A GIRL
SLAM
That's what Yan meant? When he said guys who try too hard to be gentlemen go into her bad books?
Um, I don't think you did anything wrong.
She hit me when we'd only just met

HE PASSED OUT ALL OF A SUDDEN, HUH?
YEAH.
ONE MINUTE HE WAS PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT AND THE NEXT... WE WERE JUST TALKING
AND HERE I THOUGHT HIS BLACKOUT SPELLS HAD FINALLY STOPPED
WHAT?
IS HE SICK?
NOT EXACTLY.
WELL, I CAN'T BE SURE WHAT HAPPENED BECAUSE I WASN'T THERE TO SEE IT.
SAW THINGS?
WHAT THINGS?
BUT RAUM PROBABLY SAW THINGS
YOU MEAN, LIKE GHOSTS?

NO, NOT THOSE.
HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?
HE'S, UH, TUNED TO HIS SURROUNDINGS.
YOU KNOW, LIKE UH THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE ROOM HE'S IN OR PEOPLE'S MOODS AROUND HIM. THOSE KINDS OF THINGS.
THEY BOG HIM DOWN.


BOG HIM DOWN HOW?
I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF.

I FIGURED YOU SHOULD KNOW. YOU ARE HIS ROOMMATE.
HE HAD IT BAD ONCE, BUT HE'S OK NOW, FOR THE MOST PART.

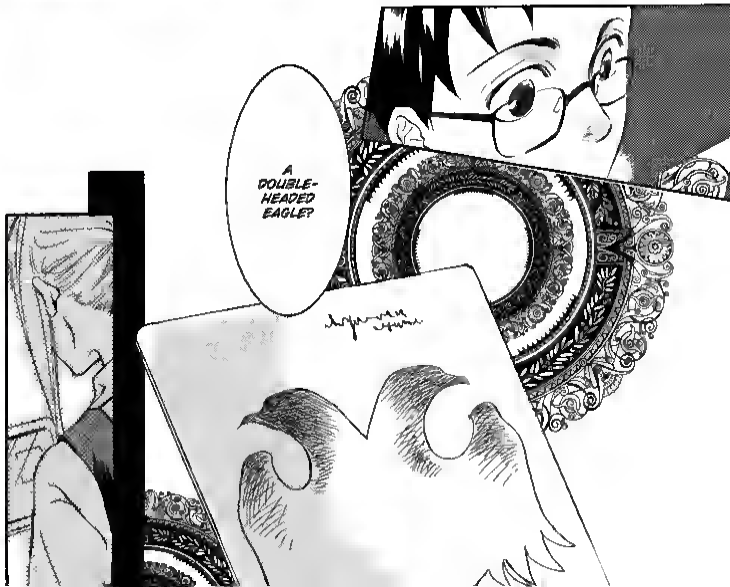
swing
RAUM GOT HAULED TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE, DID HE?
HE CAME TO NOT TOO LONG AGO NOW HE'S BACK IN HIS ROOM
THE USUAL?

PROBABLY
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE ART ROOM.
BEATS ME
RAUM DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING
MAYBE LETTING HIM WORK THERE WAS A BAD IDEA
HE WASN'T EXACTLY COMPLAINING

NOT A WORD.
SO DON'T ASK ME.
HE REALLY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOU, DID HE?
OH, YEAH?
VERY MATURE.
MATURE
THIS TAROT DECK WAS MADE BY YOURS TRULY.
I'M GOING TO USE IT TO READ WHAT RAUM'S LATEST EPISODE WAS ABOUT
IDEALLY, HE'D BE JUST THE PERSON TO ASK.
WHY ME? CAN'T YOU DO IT YOURSELF?
KAREL.
PICK A CARD.
WHAT?

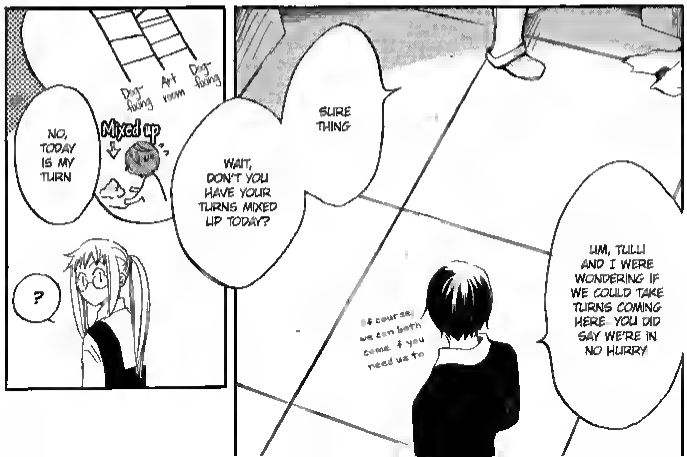
I CAN BE A GOOD SPORT, ALL RIGHT. JUST GIVE ME NORMAL PLAYING CARDS.
TSK. SPOILSPORT.
YOU'RE TOO STRONG OF A PLAYER.

HERE GOES.


A DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE?

HELLO? ANYBODY IN?
OH, SHE LEFT HER GLASSES LYING AROUND
?
WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?
NONPRESCRIPTION GLASSES, HUH?
I SEE YOU'RE BACK IN SHAPE
HUH?
YEAH, I AM.
THANKS FOR YESTERDAY
GLAD TO KNOW.
MIND LEAVING MY GLASSES ALONE?
...
IS THERE A PROBLEM?

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
GRAB
SNAP
YOU'RE PRETTIER WITHOUT THEM. THOUGH, I GUESS THAT'S A MATTER OF PREFERENCE.
HOW ABOUT YOU DITCH THE GLASSES?
FOLLOW ME YOU'VE GOT WORK TO DO.
GULP
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT PUSHES HER BUTTONS.
SHE'S NOT FLATTERED. FAR FROM IT.


Art room
Mixed up
NO, TODAY IS MY TURN
?
WAIT, DON'T YOU HAVE YOUR TURNS MIXED UP TODAY?
SURE THING
Of course! we can both come if you need us to
UM, TULLI AND I WERE WONDERING IF WE COULD TAKE TURNS COMING HERE. YOU DID SAY WE'RE IN NO HURRY

I JUST HAVE TO REPACK ALL THE ART SUPPLIES, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
THERE'S REALLY NOTHING HERE.
WHAT I SAW YESTERDAY PROBABLY DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HER.
UM, EDONA?
YEAH?
IS THAT... A DRESS?
WHY IS IT SO DIRTY?

OH, THIS?
IT'S A PARTY DRESS MY FATHER SENT ME.
I WASN'T GOING TO WEAR IT SO I MIGHT AS WELL USE IT AS A PROP.
BAD, BAD GIRL..
The dress is all bloody

YOUR FATHER.. SOUNDS NICE.
And he's competent too.
OH, YES, HE'S WONDERFUL
WHY THE WOMEN AROUND HIM DON'T SEE THAT I'LL NEVER KNOW
I WISH HE COULD FIND HIMSELF A NEW WIFE ALREADY
DO I SENSE A DADDY'S GIRL HERE?

HERE
I'M TELLING YOU THE TRUTH.
YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME?
YEAH, WELL...
I don't like him.

THE PICTURE ON THE RIGHT IS RECENT. THE ONE ON THE LEFT COMES FROM HIS YOUNGER DAYS
OH, YEAH. HE LOOKS COOL.
TOLD YOU.
DO YOU ALWAYS BRAG ABOUT HIM LIKE THIS?
'COURSE NOT!
WHY WOULD I? THAT'S SUCH A DADDY'S-GIRL THING TO DO
BUT YOU ARE ONE.
!!!
IT'S SO EASY TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THESE THINGS.
I WONDER WHY.
IS THAT
A DOG?

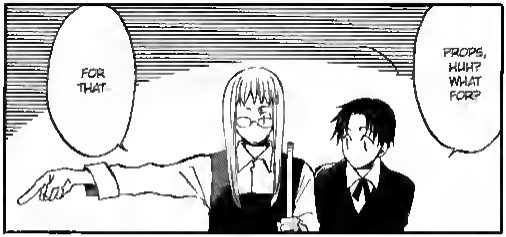
WHOA!
PEEK
HOW'S .. MY DOGGIE?
WE HAVEN'T INTRODUCED OURSELVES HAVE WE?
I'M TULLIUS
LILY
WHERE DID SHE COME FROM?
I'M NOT DONE YET. JUST WAIT A LITTLE BIT LONGER, 'KAY?
MMMKAY!
YOU LOVE YOUR MOM, DON'T YOU, LILY?
"MOTHER"? CUTE
MOTHER CALLS ME LILY
WHEN I'M WITH MY DOGGIE I GET ALL WARM AND FUZZY INSIDE
SHE'S THE ONE WHO MADE ME MY DOGGIE.
I LOVE HER LOTS!

SHE DOESN'T HAVE A MOTHER?
WHAT'S SHE SAYING?
HUH?
SO IT'S OK EVEN IF MOTHER'S NOT AROUND.
RA—
WHO SMASHED YOUR PRECIOUS DOGGIE?
THAT YOUR NAME?
LILY.
I DON'T KNOW!
LILY?
I DON'T KNOW!
SOMEBODY SMASHED IT, RIGHT?
...

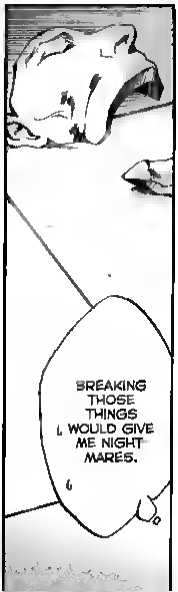
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT, RALIM?
IT WAS AN IDEA I JUST HAD TO SAY IT LOOKS LIKE I HIT THE NAIL IN THE HEAD
LILY!
DASH
I DON'T KNOW!
LILY SAID IT'S BROKEN, REMEMBER?
YEAH, BUT BROKEN INTO PIECES? SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE.
IT'S LIKE SOMEBODY DELIBERATELY—
thrash

EXCUSE ME
THRASH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
OH?
YOUR TURN AGAIN TODAY?
YES.
UM, WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU DOING?
Thrash
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
MAKING NEW PROPS BY BREAKING OLD ONES
PROPS

WANT TO HAVE A GO?
IT'S A GREAT STRESS RELIEVER.
NO, THANKS!
I'M NOT STRESSED ENOUGH TO WANT TO BREAK THINGS.
OH, REALLY?
I MEAN ...


FOR THAT
PROPS, HUH? WHAT FOR?

THE THEME IS TRAGEDY
UM ..
WHAT..?


BREAKING THOSE THINGS WOULD GIVE ME NIGHT MARES.

TRAG—
ABOUT A WOMAN WHO GOES TO HELL...
AFTER DITCHING HER MAN
THAT DRESS IS HER COSTUME?
YES.
A REAL SHAME.
WHAT IS?
YOUR FATHER PICKED THE DRESS FOR YOU, RIGHT?
JUDGING BY YOUR HAIR COLOR... AND EYES,
IT WOULD HAVE LOOKED GOOD ON YOU!
SO WHAT?

E-
EDONA,
YOUR FATHER—
prickle
?!
THUNK
YOU SAID IT WOULD HAVE LOOKED GOOD ON ME?
...THAT WOMAN...
bzzt bzzt
EDO—
prick
OF COURSE IT WOULD HAVE!
prick
bzzt

THUNK
THUNK
BECAUSE THAT'S THE KIND OF DRESS THAT LOOKS GOOD ON THAT WOMAN.
...
...HATE...
AND I LOOK EXACTLY LIKE HER!
...HATE...
E—
b22t
...
b22t
SHE DESERVES TO GO TO HELL.
WHY DO I LOOK LIKE HER?
YOU'RE SAYING I SHOULD LOSE THE GLASSES AND DRESS UP?!
THUNK
THUNK

ARE YOU TELLING ME TO FACE MY FATHER...
WHILE LOOKING LIKE A COPY OF THE WOMAN WHO LEFT HIM?!
CRASH
gasp!

DASH
...!
WEARING NONPRESCRIPTION GLASSES
NOT CARING ABOUT THE WAY SHE LOOKS
...
IT ALL ADDS UP.

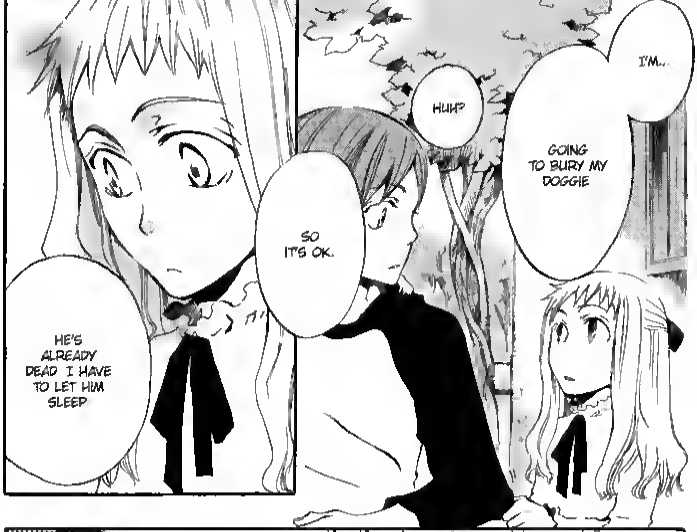
GOES TO HELL.
THE WOMAN EDON TAKES AFTER MUST BE IN THE OTHER HALF OF THIS PICTURE.
I'M SURE...
SHE'S DOING ALL THESE THINGS TO PUNISH
BOTH HER MOTHER...
AND HERSELF, FOR LOOKING LIKE HER MOTHER.
NO KIDDING.

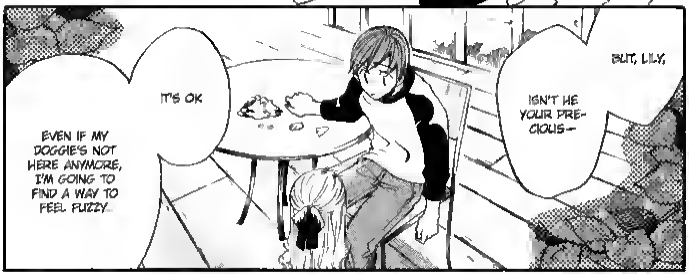
IT'S NOT LIKE
HE'S HERE TO SEE IT.
EDONA.

I WAS FOUR I THINK, WHEN MY MOTHER DISAPPEARED WITH OUR DOG
I DIDN'T UNDER-STAND IT BACK THEN.
I MISSED HER, THOUGH. I DID LOVE HER.
WHEN I WAS A LITTLE OLDER, I FOUND OUT SHE HAD REMARRIED
AND I UNDER-STOOD
MY MOTHER TOOK THE DOG
AND WALKED OUT ON MY FATHER AND ME.
YEAR IN AND YEAR OUT. THOUGH, I STARTED LOOKING MORE AND MORE LIKE THAT HATEFUL WOMAN

DADDY, DADDY,
I DON'T THINK—
YOUR FATHER WOULD BE SENDING YOU DRESSES IF HE HATED THE WAY YOU LOOK.
HE'S NEVER SAID A BAD THING ABOUT HER NOT ONCE
AM I GOING TO LOOK LIKE MOTHER SOME DAY?
MAYBE HE STILL LOVES HER.
THAT'S WHY HE HASN'T REMARRIED, HUH?
BUT HE SHOULD
HE DESERVES MORE LOVE.
I...
WAS TOO YOUNG—
TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THEM.
THAT'S IT
IF I WEREN'T HIS DAUGHTER—
DADDY'S GIRL ..

IT'S NOT MY FATHER, IT'S ME
I'M THE ONE WHO CAN'T FORGIVE HER
NOT YET
IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME TIME, BUT..
MAYBE SOME DAY.
YEAH
TUILL!
LILY!
I'M... I'M SORRY. I'M STILL FIXING YOUR DOGGIE.
fwish fwish


I'M...
GOING TO BURY MY DOGGIE
HUH?
SO IT'S OK.
HE'S ALREADY DEAD I HAVE TO LET HIM SLEEP


BUT, LILY,
ISN'T HE YOUR PRE-CIOUS--
IT'S OK
EVEN IF MY DOGGIE'S NOT HERE ANYMORE, I'M GOING TO FIND A WAY TO FEEL FUZZY.

PLEASE TELL RAUM I SAID THANKS.
OH, OK

SO, TOMORROW—
AH
WE NO LONGER NEED THAT
WHY'S THAT?
Dog fining
X
Art room
Dog fining
LILY SAID SHE'S GOING TO BURY THE DOG
!
AND "PLEASE TELL RALIM I SAID THANKS."
WAIT...
DID I EVER TELL HER MY NAME?
?
YOU DIDN'T?
IT'S ALL GOOD, THOUGH RIGHT? SHE SEEMED HAPPY
HMM
SHE LEFT BEFORE WE COULD FIND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT HER
Like why the dog was Stolen

WHOA!
HA HA...
BOY, WAS I HAPPY TO BE FREED FROM THAT FREAKING PUZZLE!
I HAD DREAMS ABOUT IT EVERY NIGHT
The dog keeps crumbling
AH...?
RALIM
I'M GOOD
NO MORE FAINTING IN THE ART ROOM.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
SAY, WHERE ARE KAREL AND YAN?
THEY'VE BEEN ASSIGNED TO SORT OUT PICTURES, SO THEY'RE COOPED UP IN THEIR ROOM TO DO JUST THAT.
OH

WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I HAVE ASSIGNMENTS TO DO?
YOU ALREADY DID THEM DURING LUNCH THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY
OH?

MORNING

Who is she?
She's looking at us.
Maybe she knows you?
KNOWS ME?
...EDONA?
WHAT?!
YOU DIDN'T RECOGNIZE ME BECAUSE YOU'D NEVER SEEN ME IN THE SCHOOL UNIFORM?
YOU'RE NOT... WEARING YOUR GLASSES.
No, it wasn't because of the uniform
NOPE.
I DIDN'T WEAR THEM BECAUSE I LIKED THEM
OH, AND I HAD MY HAIR CUT.
She didn't get her heart broken or anything, right?
She wouldn't have had a haircut for that reason.
chatter
chatter

BY THE WAY,
You stand out because you're a girl standing in front of a boys class
!!?
I SUPPOSE A SENIOR JUST STANDS OUT HUH?
CUE FOR ME TO GO BACK TO CLASS.
chatter
chatter
MY FATHER SAID HE'LL SEND ME A DRESS FOR MY BIRTHDAY
I'LL BE SURE TO WEAR IT.
IT'S UP TO ME TO HUMOR HIM UNTIL HE MARRIES AGAIN
DADDY'S GIRL.
YEAH.

...
—Itz
WHY DO PICTURES FROM WHO-KNOWS-WHEN TURN UP?
They probably had to write essays based on these pictures for something.
YOU TELL ME.
Some of them were taken at home.
ALL I KNOW IS WE'RE SUPPOSED TO RETURN THEM TO THE KIDS WHO ARE STILL IN SCHOOL
THOMAS MAGNUS...
FABILIO...
LORENZO VALLA...

FULK GRAY
ANYWAY, WHAT DID YOUR TAROT CARD MEAN? THE ONE WITH THE DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE THAT IS
RAMON RUL
TWO SIDES OF A COIN, PROBABLY
ZIMARIO...
I CAN'T READ THIS.
WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
I HAVE NO IDEA, EITHER

E...
EDONA CLARK.